Deaths Knell.

Or, The ſick mans Paſsing-bell.

Summoning all ſick conſciences to prepare themſelves for the coming of the great day of Doom, leſt mercies gate be ſhut againſt them.

Fit for all thoſe that deſire to attire at the heavenly Ieruſalem:

Whereunto are added Prayers fit for Houſe-holders.

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by W. Perkins.

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frances wolfreston: her book [illegible]

Deaths Knell.

LEt the memory of Death (good Christian)'be ever the Looking-glass of thy life, thy continuall Companion, and inseperable Spouse, Let thy solace be the sighs of a sorrowfull Soule, and those the more bitter the better: Whil'st worm-like thou crawlest here below, fasten all thy Faculties Upon the Commaudements of thy Creator, for those in thy Finall passage must be the Pilot to Stéer thee into the haven of Heaven: Think every moment thou art in the Waning, that ẏ date of thy pilgrimage is well nigh expired, & that ẏ lump of thy life lyeth twinkling upon ẏ snuffe, and that now it stands the upon to look towards thy celestial home: thy forces are enféebled, thy senses impaired, and on every side the tottering and ruinous Cottage of thy faint flesh thretneth a fall.

And méeting so many Harbingers of Death how can you but prepare for so ghostly a Guest The young-man may dye quickly, but the Old cannot live long; the young-mans life by casualty may be cut off, but the aged by Physick cannot be preserved: Gréene years must resolve to go to the grave; and the Meditations

of old age must dwell in the same: Be mindfull of things past, carefull of things present, and provident for things to come. Use the blessing of Nature to the benefit of thy Soul: be wise in well-doing, and watchfull for thy end: Serve not the World, for that can possesse thee of nothing but pride, envy, lust, anger malice and infinite follies, for it defileth a man with sin, disquieteth with troubles, oppresseth with labours, vexeth with temptations; vanquisheth with vain delights, and miserably wrappeth him up in woefull calamities. The World it is an Ambassadour of the evill; a scourge of the good, a tyrant of truth, a breaker of Peace, a worker of Warre, a sweet of Vices, a gall of vertues, a friend of lyes, an inventer of novelties, a travel to the ignorant, a table of Gluttons: a furnace of concupiscence, a sepulchre of the dead, a Prison of the living, a pitfall to the rich, a burthen to the poor, a Palace of Pilgrims, a Den of Deceivers, a slanderer of the good, a commender of the wicked, and a deluder of all. Thou hast no reason to dote upon the World: for at first it affords thee but a wrangling welcome, and at last turns thee off with a fearfull fearfull: moreover, it doth torment thee, abuse thee, consum thee, & at length expell thee: Whereas on the Contrary, Heaven doth comfort thee, conserve thee, and exalt thee.

On

On Earth thou sowest but in a field of Flint, which bringeth forth nothing but a Crop of care, languishing for thy labour: it is time therefore to leave so unthriving a Husbandry & to sowe in Gods ground the Seed of repentant Sorrow, and water it with the teares of humble Contrition, so shalt thou reap a plentifull Harvest, & gather the Fruits of everlasting consolation. Imagine then the spring to be spent, thy Summer over-past, & that thou art arrived at the fall of the Leafe, & though the living Lord doe long forbear offenders, yet at last, he will scourge them: And that his patience lends us but respite to repent: not leasure to Sin. Hee that is tossed with sturdy stormes, and cannot come to his desired Port rides little way, but is much turmoiled: So he that passeth many years, and purchaseth but small profit to his Soul, hath had a long being but a short Life, for life is to be measured by vertuous Actions, not by number of Dayes, Some Men by many Dayes Purchase many deaths, and others in short space attaine to life everlasting: What is the Body without the Soul, but a corrupted Carkas: and what is the Soul without God, but a Sepulchre of sin: Man was made and sent hither to no other purpose; but onely to serve God in this life, and to injoy Heaven in that Life hereafter.

ter. If your end be the Kingdom of Heaven, why are we so much enamoured on the earth? If the end of our Creation be eternal Salvation, why hunt we after the Vanities of this vain life? If our inheritance be to Raign as Kings, why live we like servile slaves in danger to be divided from God, from Christ our Saviour, from the Angels, from the Communion of Saints, and from the hope of our celestiall portion? If God be the way the truth and the life, then he that walketh without him wandreth: that is not instructed by him, erreth: and that liveth without him, dyeth. To revolt from him, is falling, to returne to him, is rising: to stay upon him, is sure standing, He it is from whom to depart, it is to dye: to whom to Repair, is to Revive: in whom to trust is truely to live. O be not thou like those that begin not to live, untill they be ready to dye, and then (when they deserve an enemies reward) come to crave of God a friends entertainment. Some think to snatch Heaven in a moment, which the best can scarce attain in many years, & when they have glutted themselves with Worldly delights, would jumpe from the Dyet of Dives, to the joys of Lazarus, from the Service of Satan, to the solace of a Saint. But be sure, that God is not so penurious, to make his Kingdom saleable for the

refuse

refuſe & the reverſion of their lives, who have ſacrificed the principal & prime thereof to his enemies, and their own brutiſh appetites: then onely ceaſing to ſin, when the ability of offending is taken from them. What thank is it to pardon our Enemies, when we cannot hurt them? To give away our goods, when we can kæp them no longer? To ſhake hands with our pleaſures when we can uſe them no more To forſake ſin, when ſinne leaveth us? God may be merciful at the laſt gaſpe: but moſt miſerable is that man, who caſteth the Anchor of his eternal weale or woe on ſo uncertain and ſandy a poynt. The thæfe may be ſaved on the Croſs, & mercy found at the laſt; yet it is not likely that he could find favour at his death, whoſe life earned the wages of wrath; or that his petition ſhould be accepted, who more for fear of hell, and his own ſelf alone; then for the love of God, or loathſomneſs of ſin, cryeth for mercy.

Put not off repentance therefore to the laſt poynt: take Davids early in the morning, ſtay not till to morrow, though thou ſuffereſt the Bud to be blaſted: the Flowers to fade, the Fruits to periſh, the Leaves to wither, the Boughes to dry up, and the Body of the Trée to decay, yet ſtay kæp life in the Rot for fear leaſt the whole become fewel to Hell fire: For

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Where the Tree falleth there it lyeth. Imagine that time hath Filed off the better part of thy natural forces: and left thee in the Lees of thy dying dayes, and that thou art onward in thy voyage: and not farre from the period of thy lost labour: be not therefore dis-furnished of Necessaries required in so perillous a journey O how many doe carefully begin, Industriously to prosecute, & effectually to end their labours in attaining to this Transitory trash upon Earth: but of that great affair of winning Heaven or falling into Hell, there is had no respect. Nay, they doe not so much as remember, that there is a Hell for sinners, a heaven for good livers, & dreadfull day of Judgement, or a strict reckoning to be made; Death in it's own property is sufficiently fearfull, but far more terrible, in respect to the judgement whereto it summoneth.

If thou wert now laid on thy departing pillow: or wearied with waiting, pinched with pain, drowned in dolour, oppressed with the heavy load of thy fore-past committed sinnes, wounded with the sting of a guilty crying conscience: if thou feltest the force of death cracking thy heart-strings asunder ready to make the sad divorse of thy Soul & body, if thou layest panting for shortness of Breath, sweating a fatall sweat, & tyred with strugling against

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deadly pangs; O how much then wouldst thou give for a dayes contrition, an hours Repentance, for a minuts amendment of life. Then words would be worthless in comparison of a little time, which now by whole months and years thou lavishly mis-spendeth. How deply would it wound thy Soul, when loking back unto thy self thou shouldst espye many faults Committed, but none amended: many good works omitted but none recovered thy duty to God promised, but not performed: How disconsolable would thy case be, thy Friends being fled thy senses affrighted, thy mind amazed, thy Memory decayed, thy thoughts aged, & every part disabled in it's proper Faculty, saving onely the guilty conscience crying out against thee: what wouldest thou doe when thou art stripped and turned out of thy house of clay, into the world of Wormes, the Den of Dust, & Cabine of Corruption, from thence to be convented before a most Severe Judge, carrying in thy own bosome, thy Inditement ready Written, & a perfect Register of all thy Mis-deeds when thou shouldest behold the Glorious Majesty of Jesus Christ (clothed in white Linnen, through which, his Body shining like precious stones, his eys like burning Lamps, his Face like Lightning, his Armes & Legs like flaming Brass, & his Voice like

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the Shout of a multitude) prepared to passe the sentence upon thée; when thou shalt sée the great judge offended above thee; Hell open beneath thée: the Furnace flaming, the Divels waining, the World burning, thy Conscience accusing, and thy self standing as a forlorn Wretch, to receive thy fearful and irrevocable sentence of Condemnation.

Oh, Bethink thy self, how these Visions would affright thée: to behold the Gnashing of téeth, the horror of the place, ỹ rigor of the Pain, the uglinesse of the Company, and the Eternity of these Punishments. Where the Fire is unquenchable, the Torment unsupportable, hopelesse, helplesse, easelesse, and endlesse. For our fire may be indured, that intolerable yours for Comfort, that for for Torment; ours (if not fed) Extinguisheth that (without féeding) never goeth out: ours giveth light that none: our's consumes the matter, and ends the Pain; that Torments, but never wasteth, to make the pain perpetuall. In Hell the Lazy Loyterer must be pricked with flaming Forks; the Glutton fed with hunger and thirst; the Drunkard quaffe Bowles of burning Brimstone; the Covetous pine in Penury, the Lustful imbrace ugly Snakes; and the Proud Apparrelled with shame and confusion; And further

ther to agravate their grief, and heap up the measure of their unmeasurable Misery; they shall turn up their affrighted eyes, and behold the Wæk tryumphing, the Godly rejoycing: then shall they perceive base apparel to be Glorious, gawdy attire infamous; The humble Cottage commended, the guilded Palace dispised: Simple Obedience shew fairer then subtle Policy, a clear Conscience better accepted then Profound and abstruce Philosophy: Zealous Prayers far worthier then fine Tales: good works preferred before swæt words. Is not he more then mad, that will playaway his time allotted to prevent those intollerable calamities? Is it not a senseless security, to hug in thy bosome so many Serpents as sins? or to foster in thy soul so many malicious accusers, as mortal faults? wouldst thou not then think one Life too little to repent for so many Iniquities, the least whereof is strong enough to hurle thæ unrecoverable into these unspeakable torments? betimes then devote the residue of thy dayes, to make an Attonement with Jehovah the General Judge, and so endeavour to set frée thy Soul from such Confusion as by sinne thou art sure to fall into. What canst thou purchase by being so long a customer to the World, but false ware, sute-

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able to such a Merchants shop, where Traffick is Toyle, Wealth Woe, Gain Losse: what interest canst thou recover, that can equal thy detriments in grace and goodnes? Or what canst thou Study in this vaile of Vanities, that is crmparable to the favor of God? Let not thy youthful affections oversway thee, for time will tell thee, they are but babling Follies. Let not temporal feare mislead thee, for the force of reason will rather draw thee to fear God then men, and to stand more in awe of perpetual then temporall Punishment: Who would fasten his eternal affairs upon the slipperines of uncertain life; or (who but one of distempered wits) would offer to put tricks upon him, who is the strict searcher out of the closest secrets: with whom he may dissemble to his cost, but to deceive him 'tis impossible: wilt thou account it craft to steal time from God, and to bestow it on his enemies, who keeps tale to the least minute of thy life, and at thy ending will call thee to Question, how thou hast imployed every moment? is it not Preposterous policy to fight against God till our weapons be blunted, our forces enfeebled, our strength made impotent, our best spent, and at last when we are fallen into fainting and fought our selves well nigh dead, then to

presume

presume of his Mercy, whom we have so much offended, so long opposed; would it not behold an exorbitant course, that while ỳ ship is sound, the Pilot well, the Saylors strong, the Gale favourable, and the Seas calme, to lye carelesly Idle at rode losing so seasonable weather; and then when the ships leaks', the Pilot sick, the Mariners feeble, ỳ winds aloft the storm boisterous, and the waves outragious, to Launch forth, hoist Sayle, and set out for a farre Journey, such are our evening repenters, who in the fourdoness of health, and perfect use of reason, cannot abide to cut Cables and weigh those Anchors that with holds them from God: but when their Senses are Benummed, their Reason Distracted, their Understanding dulled, and both Soule And Body Tormented with pangs of paine & sorrowful sickness then wil Cast back their memory on Those weighty affairs, then wil they néeds become sudden Saints, that are scarce reasonable creatures.

How can a man be disanimated with inward Garboyles of unsettled conscience, maimed in all his faculties, & Surrounded with such strange distempers, be fit to dispose of his choisest Jewell, his Soul, in so short a spurt: They that will loiter in Séed-time, & begin to Sowe when others Reap: They that

will have their Weapons to Provide, when their Fellow Souldiers goe forth to Fight: They that will lavish in Health, & cast their accounts when they cannot speak: They that will sleep out the day, and stumblingly travell in the Night; O let them think it their own folly if they dye in debt, and finally fall Headlong into the pit of perdition. Let the griefe of thy sore be then the measure of thy sorrow let a wide Wound have a careful cure, let thy Contrition be agreeable to thy crime, and thy repentance equal to thy transgressions. Thou must spend the day in mourning the night in watching and weeping, and thy whole time in praying & practice of Repentance, Not every short fight shal be a sufficient sattisfaction: nor every little knock, a Warrant to get in: For many cry Lord, Lord, yet are not Admitted, The Foolish Virgins knocked, yet stood without: Judas conceived a sorrow for sin, yet died desperately. Linger not thy conversion, nor put off repentance from day to day, lest the Almighty come unto thee in a minute: And in his wrath suddenly destroy thee, Neither sojourn thou long in sinfull Security, nor shift off thy Repentance till fear enforce thee to it: for then it will be bootlesse for thee to strive to Stand when thou art already fallen, Frame out thy beginning as thou meanest to end, and

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endeavour to live as thou desirest to dye, wilt thou Sacrifice the Fatling to the Fiend of darkness, and offer the carrion Carkas to the Father of light? Wilt thou present the main Crop to the Divell, and leave God the Gleanings? Wilt thou Cramme the Divell with thy fairest fruits, and turn God to feed upon thy wind-falls, and after gatherings? If Hell was prepared for the Divell, and heaven purchased for man, why should not he then provide for himself? But willingly lose his inheritance by persisting in Sin? While we draw Healthful breath, hope strongly perswades us that by teares overflowing from the Sea of a sorrowfull Soule, we may Wash away our sins pollution, how fowle soever: but being once at deaths dore, notwithstanding our teeth gnash, our tongues cry out, our throats become hoarse with howling, our eyes gush Rivers of tears, and our hearts send our sighths as loud as Thunder, yet it will not avail us for then none shall hear us, none assists us, no nor so much as comfort us: Then, O then shalt thou finde, though (alas) too late, that thou hast lost thy labour, hast trifled away thy time, and let slip the opportunity of thine own gain: Thou shalt then perceive thine errour irrevocable, thy punishment insupportable thy penitence unprofitable, thy griefe, sorrow

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and calamity irrevocable: Let thy Soule then injoy her lawfull Soveraignty, and thy body follow the foting of her directions: Let not thy servile senses, and lawless appetites over-come her, and make her a Vassall in her own Dominions. Doest thou desire to have al good necessaries, as a good house, good furniture, good fare, good apparell: And yet wilt thou suffer thy poor Soule, thy principall charge, and above all these worthy the best respect, to lye cankering & rusting in all kinds of evils: O unspeakable blindness, that thou wilt be nice in wearing a bad shoe, yet careth not to carry an ugly and battered Soul: Alas doe not thou set so light by that Jewell, which thy Maker sets at so high a price: nor rate thou thy soul at so base a penny worth, being of so pærlesse worth: If thy soul be so inestimable, that neither gold nor treasure, nor any thing of lesse price, then the precious blood of the immaculate Lambe Christ Jesus, was able to buy it: if not all the Delicacies that heaven and Earth could afford, but onely the glorious body of our Saviour, were deemed a fit repast to fæd it; If not all the Creatures of this, or millions of new worlds, if they were, but onely the unlimitable goodnesse and Majesty of God: can satisfie the desire, or fill the compasse and capacity

capacity of it (for who is so unsensible, that finds not the insatiety of his Soule?) who then, but one of perverse will, incredulous mind, or pittifull spirit, would set more by the world, then his soules worthinesse: or suffer so pærles a Paragon so many hours, dayes, months, and yeares, to lye enchannelled in the filthy mire af sin? Thou wilt trudge to the Physitian for thy sick Servant, and looke out for a Læch for thy diseased Horse and be very busie to patch up thy worn garments and yet will suffer thy soul to languish for want of looking to, and dye for want of cure: and seeing it mangled with millions of vices, and never seekest to bind it up, and restore it to it's primitive integrity. Is thy servant more nær, thy Horse more nære, and thy Coat to be more cared for then thy own Soul? How long, O how long wilt thou hunt after vanities, and rush violently and wilfully into thy own Ruine? Darest not thou suffer a Spider, or a Toad to come nær thee? and wilt thou nestle in thy bosome so many Vipers as Vices, so many Serpents as Sinnes? and permit thy silly Soule to be gnawed upon with the poysonous tuskes of Satan? Is thy Soule so sleight a Substance, as to be held in so

small esteeme? Did Christ come downe from Heaven, and became a wandring Pilgrim upon earth, exiling himselfe from the comfort of his God-head, and wearing out Thirty years in Pain and Penury for our Soules? Did he suffer the Tragedie of his Passion to be Bloodily Acted and Patiently accepted? Did he make his body as a Cloud, to dissolve into showers of unblemished Blood, and yielded the dearest veine of his heart to be cut asunder, that from thence may issue the precious price of our Soules redemption? Why do we then sell our selves to the Devil for every delight and poor Pittance of worldly Pelfe? O that a creature of so incomparable worth, should be in the custody of so unnatural Jaylors, and that which in it self is so gracious and amiable, that the Angels and Saints delight to behold, should by sinne, be made a Horrour to Heaven, and a fit prey for the Foulest Fiends? Let us remember that our soul is not onely a part of us, but also the Temple, the Paradise of Almighty God, by him in Baptisme Garnished, Furnished, and endowed with most glorious Ornaments? How will he take it, to see his Temple prophaned, and turned into a Den of Devils?

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Paradice displanted, and made a wilderneſſe of Serpents: his Spouſe deflowr'd and become an Adultreſſe to his Enemies: Durſt we commit ſuch outrage againſt our Earthly Princes: Would not the Terrour of the Law and Popular Shame Curb us from it; and ſhall not the glorious Majeſty of Iehovah and the unrebated Keenneſſe of his flaming double edged Sword, deterre us from offering the like to his Deareſt Spouſe Will he that keepes Regiſter of every ſingular haire, ſuffer himſelfe to be wronged, and over-paſſe it unpuniſhed? Remember that it is a thing full of horrour, to fall into the hands of God, who is able to cruſh the proudeſt Spirit, and to make his face his Footſtoole: O wreſtle not againſt the cares and cryes of thine own Conſcience, but ſo keep and conſerve it, as that at the laſt it may gladly goe with us, and be joyfully prepared before the throne of God to anſwer for thee.

There was a man had three Friends: two whereof he loved entirely, the third he made no reckoning of, This man being convented before the King, upon the accuſation of ſome commited crime, ſolemnly came unto his beſt Friend, and intreated him to goe with him but he would not, yet went he with him

some part of the way. Bethinking himselfe better, he returned to his second Friend, and desired him to goe with him; but he made him that flat answer, that by Reason of his more important affairs, he could not go with him: yet gave him a token of his Remembrance. Being driven to this hard exigent, he trudged to third Friend, of whom he made sleight account, And he at first word went with him to the King, and there stuck to him in all his dangers. So faires it with a man being sent for by Death, he comes to his wife, Children or Friends, and intreats them to goe along with him, but they slip their necks out of the Coller, and will but only bear him company to the Grave: then he perswades his Gods and Gold to goe along with him, but they cannot, and so turnes him off with a single simple sheet lapt about him: then when all those shrinks back and faile him, at his last point his bosom Friend, his Conscience will not forsake him. Labour then to get a good Conscience: for in the utmost of all Extremities, that will never faile thee. There was a Countrey, where the Commons used to elect their King, And again to banish him at their pleasure, to a farre Countrey, almost naked: But one (more provident then the rest)

reſt) ſo ſoon as he was choſen King, he dayly ſent before-hand ſome proviſion into that farre countrey, ſo that when the people baniſhed him from them, he was (having made a prudent preparation of wealth before) moſt Royally there entertained. So muſt every cautelous Chriſtian provide upon Earth, as he may be joyfully received into Heaven.

Prayers for private houſholds at all times.

O Lord prepare our hearts to prayer.

O Moſt mighty and eternal God, who art the Creator, Guider, Governor and preſerver of all things, both in heaven & earth; vouchſafe we humbly beſeech thee, to look down with the eye of pitty and compaſſion, upon us miſerable, & wretched ſinners who at this time are proſtate here before thee to offer up this our ſacrifice prayer & thankſgiving unto thee; and although we be unworthy by reaſon, of our manifold tranſgreſſions to preſent our ſelves before thee, yet we humbly beſeech thee for thy Son Chriſt Ieſus, our Lord and Saviours ſake, to accept of us & to grant theſe our prayers and petitions which we make unto thee.

O merciſull! Lord and loving Father, remember the infirmities of thy frail ſervants aſſiſting our weake ſouls with thy grace, that in all things we may love honor and, obey thy heavenly will & Majeſty, waking and walking in the paths of rightcouſneſs, to ſcope of perfect holineſs, condemning this witching world with all her fooliſh deluſions; for the true Glorifying of thy Name through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord, *Amen.*

Anon

Another prayer.

O Merciful Lord and loving Father, that of the incomprehenſible riches of thy mercy toward the diſobedient and loſt children of *Adam*, who ſerving Satan after the blind, & unbridled luſts of the vile fleſh (were carried away through ſin & ignorance to damnation) haſt reconcil'd us to thy favor, through grace and adoption in Chriſt *Ieſus* the righteous, by faith & holy converſation in whom we are delivered from eternal death & deſtruction, Have mercy upon us, yea (Lord) have mercy upon us, and for the love of thy ſweet Son our Redeemer, defend us againſt the power of the deſtroyer, and with thy mighty hand lift us out of the puddle and deathful corruptions of this abominable world purifying our hearts with thy grace, that we being wholly, inclined to the heavenly deſires, may grow perfect in holineſs, & abounding in the good works which thou haſt prepared for thy Saints to walk in for the glorifying of thy name; we may grow an acceptable temple for thy continual dwelling in us. O Lord to the unſpeakable peace & comfort, & to the everlaſting bliſſe and Salvation of our Souls, through Chriſt our Savionr, *Amen.*

LOrd let not the darkneſs of ignorance comprehend us.

Lead

Lead us by the continual light of thy grace to work righteouſneſſe.

Let us not ſleep in ſin O God.

Quicken our weak ſoules againſt earthly ſluggiſhneſſe.

Give us the heavenly reſt of thy unſpeakable peace O Lord.

And nouriſh us with thy grace to ſalvation,

Lord comfort the needy, the ſick the priſoned the tormented, the diſtreſſed, and helpleſs with the preſence of thy grace: and have mercy upon them and us.

Pittifully hear our complaints, O dear Father and grant our requeſts for thy ſweet Sonnes ſake our Saviour.

AP 57

FINIS.